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# Victim Compensation CONNECTION

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**V C G C B**  
Victim Compensation & Government Claims Board  
Helping California Crime Victims Since 1965

**Julie Nauman**  
Executive Officer



## Crime Victims' Rights Week 2009

**OBSERVANCE INSPIRES UNITY AS WE FACE CHALLENGES**

**FROM THE DESK OF JULIE NAUMAN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

The Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board is honored to be joining its partners throughout California to observe National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 26 through May 2, 2009. This annual event not only allows us to show our support for victims of crime, their families and survivors, but also to stand beside all victim service providers and recognize their work on behalf of victims of violent crimes.

This year, we are marking the 25th anniversary of the federal Victims of Crime Act. This historic step forward established the Crime Victims Fund to support local victim programs across the nation. California counts many firsts in victims' rights and has inspired the national movement.

Victims' Rights Week is also an opportunity to recognize the program's increasing assistance to victims. Compensation payments in California increased nearly 8 percent to just over \$81.2 million last fiscal year. The program received nearly 51,000 applications, an increase of more than 6 percent over last year and also the third annual increase. The Restitution Fund received an average of \$5.8 million monthly. This represents a 5 percent increase thanks to our restitution collection partnerships with state and county agencies.

As the Board participates in the Victims' March on the Capitol on April 29 and supports local ceremonies throughout Victims' Rights Week, we rededicate ourselves to serving the Board's many stakeholders and customers. With the Board's Strategic Plan as our guide, we are focused on continued progress.

We recognize that tight budgets and lean economic times mean we all face the challenge of doing more with less. Our partnerships with allied agencies and local victim service providers are critical to meeting these challenges. To this end, the Board is excited to host a statewide summit for county Victim Witness Assistance Program directors on May 5th. The summit, scheduled just after Victims' Rights Week, is a fitting way for us to carry the week's positive spirit forward, roll up our sleeves and work together to maintain and enhance services for victims.

## Crime Victims' Rights Week 2009

*"25 Years of Rebuilding Lives:  
Celebrating the Victims of Crime Act."*

Crime victims and their friends, family members, advocates and allies are preparing for the annual national awareness event, Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 26 through May 2, 2009.

### VICTIMS' MARCH ON CAPITOL

The Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board (VCGCB) and other victim service providers will show their solidarity with crime victims at the Victims' March on the Capitol. This 20th annual event will be held midday on April 29 on the west steps of the State Capitol.

This year's theme is "25 Years of Rebuilding Lives: Celebrating the Victims of Crime Act." It marks the 25th anniversary of the federal Victims of Crime Act, which was enacted by President Ronald Reagan in 1984. This historic step forward for victims established the Crime Victims' Fund to support local victim programs across the nation. California can look back on a legacy of leadership in victims' rights and services that has been an inspiration for other states and the federal government.

### LOCAL EVENTS, VIGILS AND CEREMONIES

Community focused organizations throughout California will be marking Victims' Rights Week with local events.

The VCGCB has published a calendar of these special events along with other resources on our website at [www.victim-compensation.ca.gov](http://www.victim-compensation.ca.gov). A Victims' Rights' Week flier is available to download and print. Links to additional materials from the federal Office for Victims of Crime are also provided.

Additionally, the VCGCB is distributing thousands of victim awareness ribbons and other materials to organizations in every California county to help them raise awareness of victims' rights. This year's theme: appears in silver on the burgundy ribbon.

## Board Hosts Summit for Victim Witness Directors

The Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board will host the second statewide summit for county Victim Witness Assistance Program directors on May 5th.

As at the first statewide directors' meeting hosted by the Board in late 2007, teamwork will top the agenda, according to Julie Nauman, the VCGCB's Executive Officer.

"Maintaining services for victims of violent crime during tough economic times will take teamwork," said Nauman, who joined the Board in mid-2008. "I've been pleased to meet and work with many county directors. This will be a valuable forum for dialogue with all program leaders."

Among the discussion items will be opportunities for joint outreach initiatives in local communities and updates on the CaRES claims management system.

County directors will receive invitations to the meeting at VCGCB headquarters in Sacramento and will be provided with further details.

The Board also maintains an ongoing connection with the county victim-services community by hosting regular meetings of the Victim Compensation Committee of the California Crime Victim Assistance Association (CCVAA). A meeting of the committee will also be held on May 5.

CCVAA membership includes Victim Witness Assistance coordinators. Committee meetings are open to anyone interested in victims' issues.



*Family members display photos of crime victims at last year's Victims' March on the Capitol.*

## April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

In an effort to increase public awareness of the frequency and breadth of sexual violence in our society, April has been designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). Sexual assault includes all types of sexual behaviors that happen without the consent of the victim, ranging from rape to sexual harassment.

This year's SAAM campaign is aimed at preventing sexual violence in our workplaces; motivating supporters with the slogan "Respect Works!" Since the first

observation of SAAM in 2001, the National Sexual Violence Resource Center has asked that everyone wear a teal colored ribbon, in order to signify solidarity. For more information visit the National Sexual Violence Resource Center website at [www.nsvrc.org](http://www.nsvrc.org) or call 1-877-739-3895.

The California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA) is a statewide organization working to end sexual violence. The organization's primary membership is the 92 rape crisis centers and rape prevention

programs located throughout California. For more information, call 916-446-2520, e-mail [info@calcasa.org](mailto:info@calcasa.org) or go to [www.calcasa.org](http://www.calcasa.org).

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual assault, contact the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) to find a rape crisis center near you. It is free and confidential 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## National Child Abuse Prevention Month

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. The month focuses on raising awareness about child abuse and neglect and encouraging individuals and communities to support children and families.

To ensure the safety and welfare of children, Congress passed the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) in 1974. CAPTA has been amended over the years and has most recently been amended by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003, but the purpose of the original legislation remains intact.

To ensure the safety and welfare of children, the United States Congress passed the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) in 1974. CAPTA provides federal funding to states in support of prevention, assessment, investigation,

prosecution, and treatment activities and also provides grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for demonstration programs and projects.



One such source of information is on the Child Welfare Information Gateway website at <http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmonth/involved.cfm>. Here you can find information on child abuse and



Images used by [Childwelfare.gov](http://Childwelfare.gov) to raise awareness of National Child Abuse Prevention month.

neglect, including an overview, information on defining and identifying child abuse and neglect, prevalence, types of child abuse and neglect, how to prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect, how to support and preserve families, and much, much more. Also included are statistics on child abuse and neglect and a state statute search engine.

## National Youth Violence Prevention Week

**National Youth Violence Prevention Week is March 23 – 27, 2009.** The National Youth Violence Prevention Campaign (campaign), which was founded by the National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere (S.A.V.E.) and The Guidance Group, introduced National Youth Violence Prevention Week. The campaign splits up the week into five topics that address violence prevention, and a new issue is highlighted each day of the week.

If you would like to find out more information about National Youth Violence Prevention Week, go to the National Youth Violence Prevention Campaign's website at <http://www.nyvpw.org/>. Further information on the various topics of the week, including an "Action Kit" with tools to coordinate and promote this important initiative, can be found along with fun and insightful ways to get kids involved in discussions on violence prevention at their school, after school program, faith-based institution, or community gathering.



## Connect With the Latest Victim Compensation Content for Your Site

The California Victim Compensation Program (VCP) offers a flexible package of banner graphics, text, links and even multimedia YouTube content that Victim Witness Assistance Programs and other victim-service organizations may use to update and enhance their own sites.

The following content for your site is available in the “Resources” section of [www.victimcompensation.ca.gov](http://www.victimcompensation.ca.gov):

The quickest way to upgrade your Victim Compensation Program website content is by adding a banner graphic link that allows website users to click directly to [www.victimcompensation.ca.gov](http://www.victimcompensation.ca.gov). Graphics are available in standard horizontal banner and vertical formats to fit a variety of site designs.

Keep in mind that website text starts to become outdated as soon as it is posted. Frequent updates keep content fresh. If the text on your site pertaining to the Victim Compensation Program needs an update or expansion,

consider copying the text provided on the “Resources” page or other pages at [www.victimcompensation.ca.gov](http://www.victimcompensation.ca.gov).

If you would like to add some of the program’s multimedia content to your website, link to the program’s YouTube channel, [www.youtube.com/user/CaliforniaVCP](http://www.youtube.com/user/CaliforniaVCP). The CaliforniaVCP channel on YouTube features the “Helping Victims Every Day” online video. Another option is embedding the YouTube video itself into your site. If your organization has a YouTube channel, we invite you to subscribe to the California VCP channel.

Click on the “Resources” tab at [www.victimcompensation.ca.gov](http://www.victimcompensation.ca.gov) to access this web content and for more detailed information on how to add the graphic, text or video content to your site. Depending on how your site is administered, technical assistance from your organization may also be needed.

## VCP Special Teams Focus on Enhanced Service

In keeping with the VCGCB’s 2008-2012 Strategic Plan, the Victim Compensation Program has deployed specialized teams to improve customer service and claims processing efficiency. This important improvement is already showing signs of success.

“New technology is just part of improving services for victims,” said Chip Skinner Deputy Executive Officer for the Victim Compensation Program. “Enhancing staff teamwork and communication are also key and that’s what this change is all about.”

The new teams specialize in various types of benefit determination such as medical, income or support loss, mental health or relocation bills. Implemented in early January, the handling of crime-related bills by expert staff has shown a significant decrease in processing time. In addition to the time savings, victims and stakeholders can now obtain information directly from the team working with their type of claim.

These teams allow expert staff to quickly identify potential delays and respond to unique situations with experience. The teams are yet another way to serve crime victims faster and improve the processing of applications and bills.



Crime Hurts Everybody **We Can Help.**

**Victim Compensation Program**

**1-800-777-9229**

*Shown above is one of the web banners available to link to the VCP website.*